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FRANK G. CARPENTER'S LETTER.

# A Parcels Post For the Farmers

## FOURTH ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL DE GRAW TALKS OF THE NEW PLANS FOR THE RURAL FREE DELIVERY.

How the System Might Be Inaugurated—Foreign Versus Domestic Merchandise Rates—The Growth of Our Rural Mail Service—Mr. De Graw Says the Increased Wages Are Not High. Working For Road Improvement and Making Road Maps—Passing of Small Postoffice.

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WASHINGTON, D. C., July 29.—Fifteen years ago when Uncle Sam was still but little more than a machine for collecting taxes and paying employees, the man outside the city got his letters as he could once a day, once a week, or perhaps, once a month. To do so he had to ride or walk miles, and his only source of sending mail was through the country postoffice, to which he must go. Then began the era of Uncle Sam, postmaster, and the agents of the postoffice department commenced to call daily at the homes of the farmers. This was the beginning of the rural free delivery, which has now spread to every part of the country, and which daily serves more than 20,000,000 people. There are already over 40,000 rural mail carriers, who are always en route, and the miles they daily travel are more than four times as great as from here to the moon. In a year of 300 working days, they cover a distance of about 300,000,000 miles, or over three times as far as from the earth to the sun, and the total annual cost of the service approximates the enormous sum of \$38,000,000.

### Starting the Rural Free Delivery.

Before I tell you of the new plans which Uncle Sam has for this branch of his business—plans which involve the parcels post and other important additions—I want to say a word as to how the rural free delivery was started. It had been in use in other countries for years when Uncle Sam took it up. The British were sending their letters to almost every home in the United Kingdom, and so were the Belgians, French, Swiss and Germans. Long before we began to consider the matter. Then about the year 1890 our postmasters general began to look into it, and in 1893 one of them reported to congress, saying that it would cost at least \$20,000,000 per annum and would bring little back. A year later congress was willing to test the matter and made an appropriation of \$10,000 for the purpose, but postmaster general Bissell refused to spend the money so foolishly, and when a year or two later, the appropriation was increased to \$20,000 postmaster general Wilson said that the plan was impracticable, and it was not until 1896, when congress gave him \$50,000, that he made the first test. The business was then started in 42 places, but it was badly managed and it did not succeed. The following year it was tried again, but this time at the request of the then first assistant postmaster general, Perry S. Heath, who got congress to appropriate \$150,000 for the purpose. Mr. Heath urged the matter, but some of the senators objected, and one of them said: "Mr. Heath, you are acting very unwisely. The first thing you know we

will have all our farmers demanding a daily delivery, and they will cause us no end of trouble."

Perry Heath replied that the farmers had the right to a daily mail as well as the city people; that they were taxed just as heavily and that they had just as great a part in the government. At any rate, the appropriation was granted and 83 routes were established that year. The next year the number was doubled, and 10 years thereafter the carriers were more than 37,000 in number. At that time the mileage was over 800,000 and the cost had risen to be more than \$28,000,000 per annum. It is now \$38,000,000 more and the length of the routes all told is just about 1,000,000 miles.

### A Talk With Gen. P. V. De Graw.

During the past week I have had a long talk with the fourth assistant postmaster general, P. V. De Graw concerning the new plans for the extension of the service. He tells me that the applications for new routes have been largely complied with and that within a few weeks the department will be up to date. The service has now been extended to every part of the United States, although there are scattering sections where it has not yet been introduced. Over 500 new routes were provided for last year. During the coming year the new salaries will come into effect, and from now on the carriers who have to cover distances of 24 miles and will receive \$1000 per annum; carrying 300,000,000 miles for \$400 or \$500, which is the pay for those who cover from six to ten miles.

In my talk with the fourth assistant postmaster general I asked him if he did not think \$1000 a rather high wage for the men who work so hard, and he said that outside the city, where board is cheap and wages are generally much lower, he replied:

"It is not a high rate of pay for the service required and a man could not make it for less. It is a lower rate comparatively than that of the postmen of the cities, who get from \$600 to \$1000 a year, according to the size of the town and the length of their service. They receive this without having to make any investment or to incur any extra expense for their work. The rural free delivery man, who makes 24 miles a day for six days of the week, needs at least two horses, and on some of the routes parcels post is necessary. My idea is, that service during bad weather. These have to be furnished out of the pocket of the man himself, and he must in addition pay for his vehicles. The estimated average cost of maintaining such an outfit is \$250 per annum, and the original cost of the horses and vehicles is \$275 or more.

The average annual cost of the carrier's outfit in fact is from \$300 to \$350, and even at the best he has only \$600 or \$700 left for his wages."

"Moreover," continued Mr. De Graw, "it is found that with the daily wear and tear of the carrier's equipment is subjected that the life of both horses and vehicles ranges from three to five years, so you see he has not such a soft snap after all. In cases where he travels less than 24 miles he gets less money. I am not in favor of too low wages in the postoffice department. My idea is the same as that held by former president Roosevelt. This is that 'the national

government should be a model employer; that it should demand the highest quality of service from its employees and should care for them properly in return."

The Rural Post Office Specialist.

"What do you think of the rural delivery in connection with the rural delivery?"

"Yes, in time, although congress has not given us an appropriation to experiment with as yet. The postoffice department would like to see it tested. It would certainly increase the usefulness of the postal service, and a system might be established for the carriage of merchandise and such material would be a fair compensation for the service performed, and would materially increase our revenues. The people want to send small packages of merchandise by mail through the rural delivery, but they will not pay the fourth class rate. Such a service could be organized for the local merchants and the rural delivery to customers of any one section without injuring or competing with any service."

We have the machinery for it in operation, and it would materially increase the income of the department. By this means a special reduced rate of postage could be made upon merchandise carried only by rural carriers. I have no doubt of its practicability. If every one of our rural delivery carriers would take on an average of three packages a day at a cost of 25 cents each there would be a return of \$16,000,000 from that business alone. We are now running the department without a deficit, but that \$16,000,000 would be added to the surplus, for it would not cost us any more than the amount we are now spending.

A few years ago I recommended that the delivery by rural carriers to communities remote from postoffices be supplemented by a parcels post delivery at a special rate of postage of 5 cents for the first pound and of 2 cents for each additional pound or fraction thereof up to 11 pounds; provided that the goods were mailed at the distributing post office of the rural route upon which the customers live. I have no doubt some kind of a satisfactory arrangement could be made which would be of great convenience to the people and to the country merchants."

### Cheap Postage for Foreigners.

"As it is now Mr. De Graw, a merchant living in London or Berlin can send goods through our mails more cheaply than though he had a branch office in New York and sent his goods from there, can he not?"

"This is true," he replied. "According to the present arrangements all fourth class matter posted at any one place in the United States at any other place therein costs 1 cent an ounce or 16 cents a pound and the limit of weight is four pounds. The New York agent of the London firm, if he sent the goods by mail from New York, would have to divide them up into four pound packages, and if they were full weight pay 64 cents for each such package, and should he wish to ship 11 pounds, he would have to put them into three different packages, one of which might be three pounds, and the whole 11 pounds would cost him \$1.76. On the other hand, suppose the London merchant shipped direct from his house in London. He could mail it to San Francisco, Los Angeles or any part of the United States. If he sent a four pound package from London instead of it costing him 64 cents it would cost him 45 cents, and if two pounds, 24 cents instead of 32 cents, which would be the rate if mailed in the United States. Similar rates prevail for the shipment of articles from here to foreign countries, it being much cheaper to send the same article from Chicago to Cairo or Calcutta than from Chicago to New York. In the one case the merchandise goes by the international parcels post rate at 12 cents a pound, and in the other at our domestic rate, which is 16 cents a pound."

The Rural Delivery and the Newspapers.

"What has the rural delivery done for the press of the United States?" I asked.

"I have increased the circulation of

the newspapers to an enormous extent. It has made the farmer a daily subscriber and has led to the building up of small dailies all over the country. The farmers are the real thinkers of the United States, and since the rural delivery has been established they have been doing more thinking than ever. They are more careful readers than the city people. They go through the papers column by column, reading the news articles and not merely the headlines. They study the editorials, and the result of their thinking is seen in the letters which come here to Washington and to congress. We have had to discontinue some of our routes, and in such cases we find that the most strenuous protests come from those who are thus prevented from daily receiving their favorite newspapers."

### Working for Road Improvement.

"Another important thing that the rural mail service is accomplishing," said the fourth assistant postmaster general, "is connected with the roads of the country. We are now working with the agricultural department bureau of road improvement and are insisting on good roads wherever the mails are carried. We refuse to grant a route until the roads have been put into shape, and if they become impassable or such a condition that the delivery cannot be easily continued over them, we insist that they be repaired or say that the service will be discontinued. In this work we are assisted by the road officials of many of the states who sent out to each rural carrier a blank containing questions to be answered as to the conditions of the roads over which he travels."

"He is asked to report as to the materials of which they are composed, as to the condition of their bridges, and as to how they are worked. The state of Indiana, for instance, has made a law that all the highways along the rural delivery routes must be kept in passable condition all the year round. A neglect to comply with this law after five days' notice is punishable by a fine of from \$1 to \$25 per day, which is levied on the locality. Other states are considering similar laws, and by these means material improvements are being made in the roads of the country."

"As it is now our carriers are going daily over nearly a million miles of roadway, and we have now instructed the postmasters at the rural delivery offices to send in detailed reports concerning these roads. So far we find that only 35,000 miles of them are of macadam, the remainder being of earth, sand or gravel. The reports show that the rural delivery service was established more than \$70,000,000 has been expended on the roads traversed by our carriers, and we are glad to say that the road officials and people generally are doing much to put the roads into better shape for the service. In the past year more work has been done on such public highways than in any other year since the rural delivery was started, and our reports indicate that a general interest in road improvement is being manifested throughout the country."

The Feasibility of the Small Post Offices.

"Does not the rural delivery do away with many of the smaller post offices?" I asked.

"They have been discontinued by the thousand. There is no necessity of such offices with an efficient rural carrier service. The carrier is not a mere collector and distributor of the mail. His wagon is a miniature post office on wheels, often containing compartments for stamps and postal cards. He has the authority to sell these as well as to register letters delivered to him which may contain money or valuable matter. In some places he is authorized to exchange currency for money orders sent by the people on his route, and he delivers registered letters and special delivery mail to the individuals, taking their signatures therefor. If a farmer wishes to mail a letter and has no stamps he can leave the amount necessary to prepay the postage with the letter in the box and the carrier must stamp it. In short, the service is as far as possible what

I have described its little postoffice on wheels."

### Making Road Maps of the United States.

"What else is your division doing, Mr. De Graw?"

"As to this division," said the fourth assistant postmaster general, "it does considerable outside the rural delivery service. We have to do with all the dead letter mail, which last year amounted to over thirteen million pieces, of which we opened and returned to their owners more than seven million. We have mail force of 176 clerks, under Col. James R. Young, who do nothing but handle dead letters and packages which have been too badly addressed to be delivered. That alone is quite a chore."

"But outside that and more directly connected with the rural delivery service is the division of topography. This is little appreciated except here in the department, but it is an important one in our machinery. It collects, compiles and publishes all the geographical information required by the service, including the platting of existing post offices and the mail routes. This information is embodied in post-route maps and in blue prints. We have 500 such maps in the department here, and they have to be corrected every month. In addition, we have about twenty three thousand special diagrams, which are intended for the railway mail service and we have to draft maps of the counties where the complete rural delivery service has been established. We made 275 new maps of that kind last year. These maps are of great value not only to the department but to outsiders. They are used by business firms and private individuals and are sold at just 10 percent over the cost of printing, the proceeds going to making more maps. Indeed we have plenty to do."

Frank G. Carpenter.

## DEMING MAY GET RAILROAD PARKED

Southern Pacific Official to Make a Favorable Report.

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The Herald's agent in Deming is C. C. Rogers, room 1, Decker building, telephone 213. The Herald will be delivered to all parts of the city same night of publication, at 60 cents per month.  
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Deming, N. M., July 29.—Division superintendent J. H. Dyer, district engineer J. D. Matthews and assistant general manager and freight agent E. W. Clapp, of the Southern Pacific company, were in Deming for a conference with the chamber of commerce and citizens looking to parking the company's right of way opposite the union station. Previous to the specially called meeting of the chamber, to meet the men the party was taken in an automobile to some of the big wells, and shown the actual work of irrigating 200 acre fields by pumping. The officials promised the citizens they would do all they could in the matter of cooperating to establish the park, and that their report on the proposition would be favorable.

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## BIG FLOOD TIDE SCARES HILLSBORO

Two Cows and Horse Are Drowned—Range Green and Good.

Hillsboro, N. M., July 29.—One of the largest floods in recent years came down the north and middle Percha creeks, causing quite a good deal of excitement. It looked for some time as though a number of the business houses would be in danger, but the water began to recede, when within a few feet of Keller-Miller & company's and Disinger Bros. stores, these being the places in greatest danger in the business section. The dyke at the rear of the Sierra County bank, which was erected some years ago at a cost of about \$500, was damaged to some extent. Two head of cattle came down in the rushing stream, probably having been caught in the canyon one and one-half miles above here, and one horse was caught in the flood just below town, this being the extent of the loss in that line, so far as can be learned at present. A number of yards were flooded in the Mexican quarter but the damage was very slight. A great many Mexicans were seen rescuing drift wood from the head of the flood, in some instances wading water waist deep. Rain has been very heavy in the mountain since the flood reached here and it is feared even a worse flood will come down.

The range in this county, according to reports of all the cattle and goat men, is in better condition than it has been for a number of years, and an average of one good slow rain per week for nearly two months. Where the hills and mountains were a mass of brown at this time last season, they are now completely covered with grass and wild flowers.

Two cattle buyers were here a short time ago and contracted for 800 head of one and two year old steers, to be delivered August 25. The cowboys are all getting busy on the roundup.

## THE CHURCHES.

HOUSTON SQUARE BAPTIST—Corner Montana and Ange Sts. (1609 block), J. J. Bullard, pastor, 8:45 a. m. morning at 9:40 the Bible school will hold its session. Classes for all ages. Divine worship at 11, with a sermon by the pastor on The Resurrection of Prayer. Evening worship at 8 on the church lawn. At this service the pastor will be assisted by a sermon on the Life of Christ. The screen will be arranged in front of the building and 50 slides will be used in presenting the leading events in the Saviour's life. Should the weather prevent the service will be held indoors. A hearty welcome to all.

TRINITY METHODIST—Corner Mesa and Boulevard Casap, S. Wright, pastor. Preaching at 11 a. m. and 8 p. m. by the pastor. Subjects reserved for developments at Fort Worth. Music by G. Verdi. Mrs. Howe, Messrs. Rose and Ravenhill, 8 p. m. anthem, "O How Amiable Are Thy Dwellings" (J. E. West), solo, Mrs. W. D. Howe. A good day; your church suffers from your absence. All welcome, seats free. Strangers cordially welcomed.

EAST EL PASO PRESBYTERIAN—Corner Poplar and Texas streets. No morning preaching service tomorrow, as the pastor will preach at Altura Park, Sunday, July 30, at 9:45 a. m. Evening service at 8 p. m. Preaching by the pastor, Rev. Kenneth Brown. Christian Endeavor meeting at 7:30.

ALTURA PRESBYTERIAN—Sunday school at 9:45 a. m. preaching by Rev. Kenneth Brown at 11 a. m.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN—Corner North Oregon and Franklin, two blocks north of the Sheldon. Perry J. Rice, pastor. Sunday school, 9:45 a. m.; communion and preaching at 11 a. m.; C. E. service at 8:30 p. m. There will be no evening service. Pastor Rice will preach in the morning.

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL—Corner Myrtle avenue and Ochota street. Rev. Bernard Gibbs, pastor. Sunday school, 9:45 a. m.; morning worship at 11 a. m.; League devotional service, 8 p. m.; evening worship, 8 p. m.; midweek prayer meeting Wednesday 8 p. m.

CALVARY BAPTIST—The Sunday school of this church meets at 9:45 a. m. and is keeping up during the summer remarkably well. Come. The 11 a. m. sermon will be on "A Church of Power" at 11 a. m. Ladies Aid meets next Wednesday afternoon 3 p. m. at the home of Mrs. Thompson 314 North Oregon street. Free classes in oil and china painting.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL—Crawford theater, 11 a. m. Rev. Miles Hanson will preach subject, "Conduct and Life or Piousness and Apollis." Disposition of the church. Ladies Aid meets next Wednesday afternoon 3 p. m. at the home of Mrs. Thompson 314 North Oregon street. Free classes in oil and china painting.

Mutt and Jeff are with us. Another appearance today on Grandstand stage. Every day in The Herald hereafter.

## BLES Military Academy

Open September 20th, New Management.

President Lexington College, Lexington, Mo., fifteen years president of Baylor College, Belton, Tex., has absolute lease. Over one million dollars invested. Finest equipment outside of West Point. Full faculty. Col. G. L. Byrde, U. S. A., Commandant. Send for catalogue, W. A. Wilson, A. M., Supt., Macon, Mo.

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## TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY.

Thirty-eight year, Co-educational, open September 19th. In the best equipped school plant in the Southwest; absolutely fireproof, thoroughly modern in every appointment. Every student provided with individual compartments for all personal effects. Artesian water for all purposes. Location high and overlooking the city three miles distant, northeast; 15 minute service on electric cars; short walk from an elegant park of 35 acres; abundant grounds for athletic sports. Students accepted on advanced standing in Eastern Universities; faculty of 26 from leading universities and conservatories of America and Europe. Superior advantages in music, art and science. A business college of very high grade is thoroughly established whose students enjoy all advantages of the university at no extra cost. Our department of Education is recognized by the State authorities and State certificates are issued to students. Fort Worth Medical College, of 17 years operation, connected with this institution. Address W. B. PARKS, A. M., Ph. D., Acting Pres., Fort Worth, Texas.

## THE PEACOCK MILITARY COLLEGE, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

The first school in Texas classed A by the War Department. Army officer, guns, equipment provided by the government. A select school for sons of gentlemen. A delightful suburb, free from the temptations of a city. Supervision day and night. A young man's associates are the highest concern. West End Lake provides boating, swimming and fishing. No obligation to join the Army or Navy. The highest ethical standards. Not a cheap school. No vacancies for work. Special university preparation. THE PEACOCK MILITARY SCHOOL, Corpus Christi, Texas, solves the boy vacation problem. Public school studies in forenoon. Recreation, sailing, swimming, nautical instruction in the afternoon. One of the ten marine schools established by congress. THE ALTA VISTA HOTEL, Corpus Christi, now open for guests at family rates. Fall session opens September 12th, 1911.

## PILES CURED AT HOME BY NEW ABSORPTION METHOD.

If you suffer from bleeding, itching, blind or protruding Piles, send me your address, and I will tell you how to cure yourself at home by the new absorption treatment; and will also send some of this home treatment free for trial, with references from your own locality if requested. Immediate relief and permanent cure assured. Send no money, but tell others of this offer. Write today to Mrs. M. Summers, Box F, Notre Dame, Ind.